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Mansfield NOW MAGAZINE

August 2007



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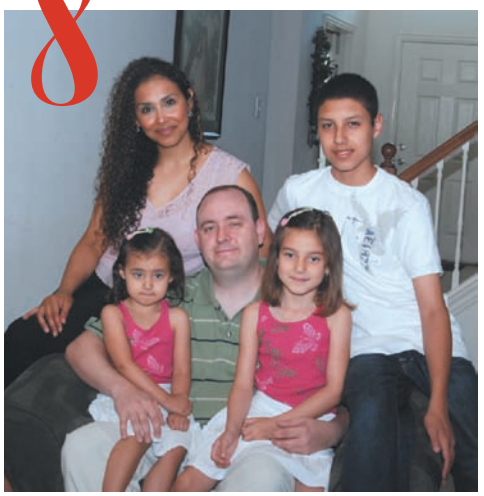
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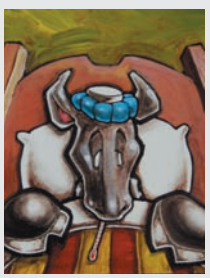
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Subscriptions are available at the rate of $35 per year or $3.50 per issue. Subscription and editorial correspondence should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O. Box 1071, Waxahachie, TX 75168. For advertising rates and other information, call (817) 477-0990 or e-mail us at: rhensley@nowmagazines.com.

Mansfield NOW MAGAZINE
The Community Magazine Serving Mansfield and the Surrounding Area

Editor's Note



An Amazing Ride!

Like the little red engine, who may have said, "I think I can; I think I can," the amazing people in this issue have all adopted that can-do philosophy. This month, we highlight your neighbors who are making a difference – from the healthful, creative cooking ideas of Athena Runyan and the customer care of Advanced Vision Care to Butch Cappel, a man who volunteers his unique services to fight domestic violence. Read EducationNOW to learn how Principal Chuck Roe put ingenuity to work, helping create a children's book – written by our own children of Mansfield!

Neighbor Adriana Alliss, reminds us of the principle upon which our nation was founded with her true grit, while Jim and Mary Van Zandt and the Magnolia Rose Band inspire us with their creativity and style. As stated in their debut CD, *The Road*, "What an awesome ride it has been!"

Truly, I am thankful to have met such inspiring people!

Alex Allred
Mansfield Editor

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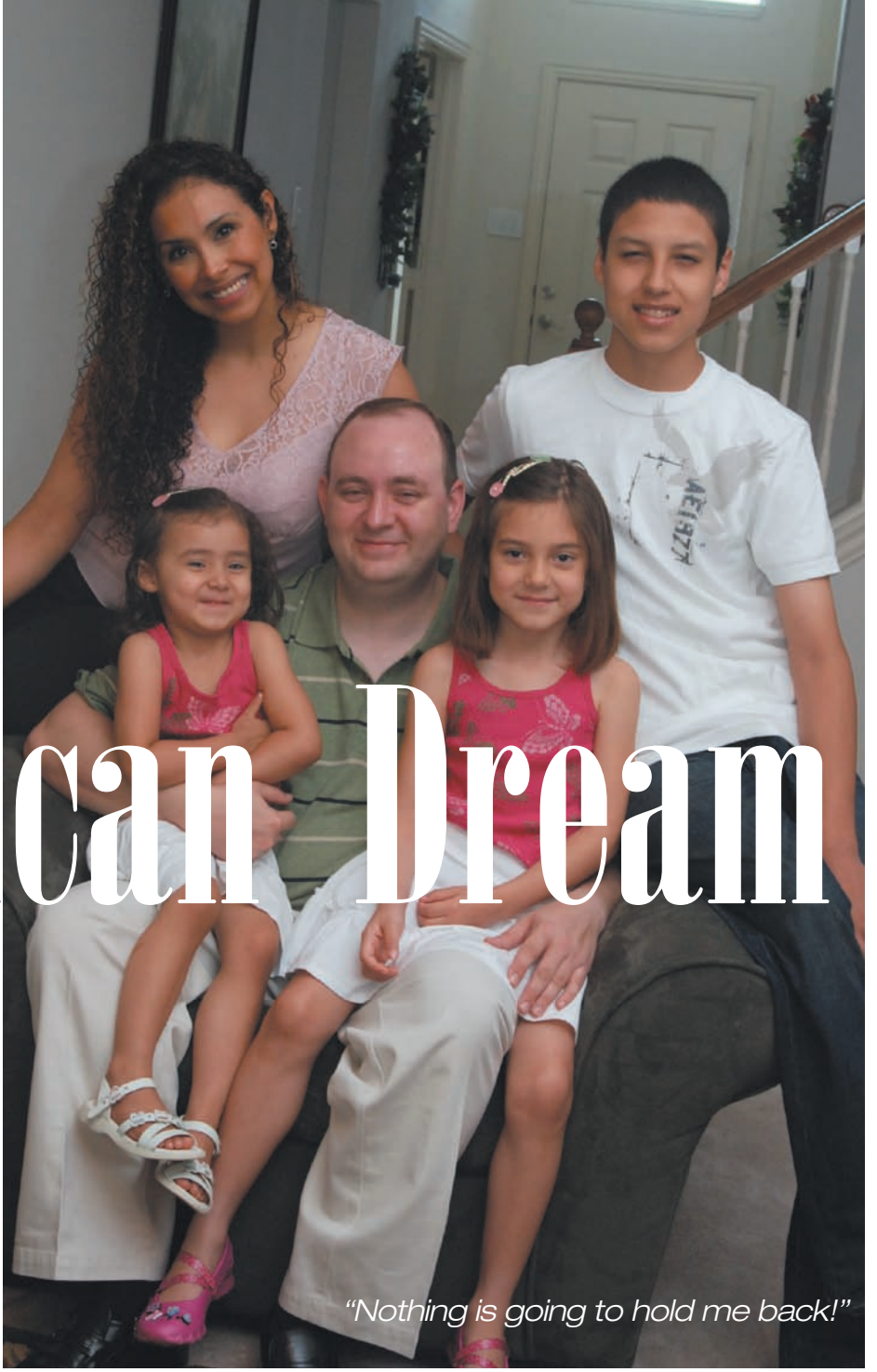
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Living the American Dream

— By Alex Allred



"Nothing is going to hold me back!"

Adriana Alliss is a living example of the American dream. She is the ideal American citizen, who has wholly embraced the attitude and integrity upon which this nation was founded. On September 19, 2005, Adriana became an American citizen. But her story began long before that.

When the Carrascos, American missionaries to Mexico, visited Adriana's small hometown, a friendship developed between her family and the missionary family. When the Carrasco family headed back to United States, they extended an invitation to Adriana's older sister, Avigail, to study English at the Prairie State College in Chicago, Illinois. Within a year, Avigail was studying English and the family soon followed her.

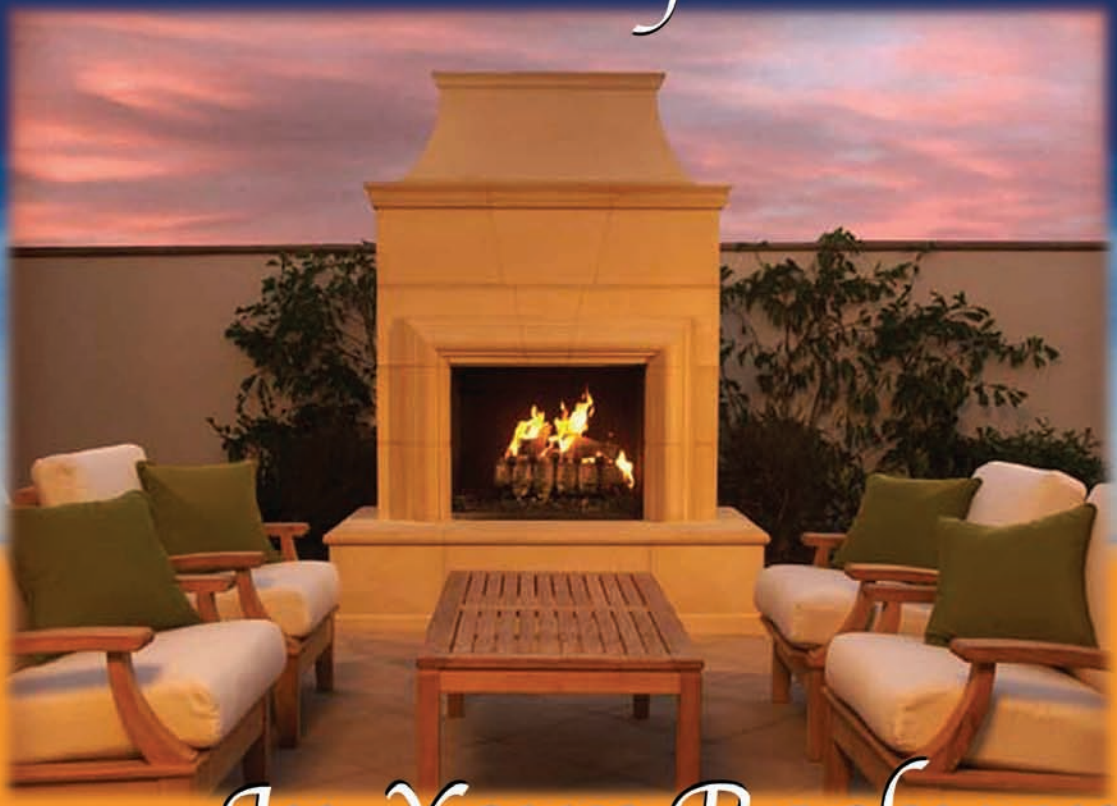
It was 1992 when Adriana's parents, Arturo and Yolanda Cabriales, moved to Chicago to open their own cleaning business. Adriana was a young, single mother with a one-year-old boy adapting to an entirely new culture, but from the onset, she held one motto: "Nothing is going to hold me back!"

Looking back, she recalled how she struggled to learn English and how others would use this apprehension of a new language and culture as a roadblock. "I wasn't going to do that. I don't ever want to say, 'Man, I should have tried that.'"

When Avigail married Oscar Carrasco and the two moved to Dallas, Texas, where he was starting a new job as a police officer, they talked Adriana into coming for a visit. They were anxious for her to meet a young man named Vincent Alliss.

"We met over the phone," Adriana said. Immediately, she knew she liked him. "I know it's corny, but I like how he treated his mom." She liked his

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values, his sense of family and his dedication as a police officer. Vincent, on the other hand, recalled their first face-to-face meeting.

"I was immediately attracted to her. She was quiet, but I was struck by her exotic beauty, the dark skin and long, curly black hair," Vincent said. "I'm a shy person by nature, in spite of the extroverted demands of my job, and when I asked her out I had no idea that she would actually accept. I was most amazed by the values she held to: honesty, fidelity, hard work, dedication to family and God above all things and relentless, self-reliant determination to achieve whatever she set her mind to."

Those same qualities still hold today. As Vincent is quick to point out, Adriana did something few people have the courage to do. She left her home in Chicago and moved to an unfamiliar city to be with her soon-to-be-husband.

Together, she and Vincent reared her son, Abner, as well as their two daughters, Aliera and Kady. In that time, Adriana stayed true to a promise she had made herself. She attended classes at a local community college to further her education, improved her English and pursued her real passion to teach fitness classes. Through nothing less than what Vincent referred to as "grim determination," Adriana earned her fitness certifications in a variety of different classes, driving all over the metroplex to attend different training seminars.

"She's a firecracker," said Group X Area Manager Micki Stary. The fitness director was initially concerned that some gym members might have difficulty with Adriana's heavy accent. "But her energy and enthusiasm, as well as her drive and determination, sets her apart from the crowd."

"There's so much I want to do," Adriana said, citing her desire to teach classes for Spanish-speaking people. While she is a phenomenally strong athlete who enjoys the kind of workouts most people could not handle, she

truly wants to help other people. "I don't know what it is," she commented. "It's just something that I feel. I really want to help people reach their goals. I want to help people make a lifestyle change." When Adriana says that she never wants to have regrets later in life, she wants to make sure no one else does either.

Because she remembers a time when a language barrier was so limiting, Adriana wants to help non-English speaking people reach their full potential



"... and relentless, self-reliant determination to achieve whatever she set her mind to."

as well. "I see how afraid they are to talk to people, to ask questions." With this, she shrugged. "I just really want to help."

"The thing that really struck me about Adriana is, she's willing to do anything possible to be the best and to do her best. She really wants to change people's lives. That wows me about her," Micki said.

What few people know about her, however, is that as serious and dedicated as she is in her quest to help others, and as focused as she is to remain a hands-on, full-time mother, Adriana is also a notorious practical joker among friends and family – all of whom secretly fear falling prey to her wicked sense of humor. One such prank involved her brother-in-law, the police, a harrowing car ride and at least four police units.

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"To this day," Vincent said, "I have no idea how she talked her way out of that mess!"

For those who do know her, both professionally and personally, Adriana is described as stoic, fiercely independent, strong yet caring, compassionate and deeply loyal to her friends and family.

"Fortunately for all of us," said her husband, "she was blessed with



seemingly limitless patience, whereas I find myself ever-burning a short fuse. She provides me with strength at the times when my job has sapped me emotionally.

"I can't pick one thing that I love most about Adriana, for I love them all. I can only aspire to be as good a husband to her as she is a wife and companion to me. For those with long memories, I think The Vogues said it best in their 1965 hit, "Five O'clock World," "... cause every time my baby smiles at me, I know that it's all worthwhile."

Certainly, it would appear that Adriana is living the all-American dream with a gorgeous family, a loving husband, a nice home and a career she loves. But long before she earned her citizenship papers, she embraced the spirit of our great nation. She loves her family, honors her neighbors and devotes her energy to making ours a better world. NOW

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Well Ahead of Their Time

— By Sandra McIntosh

Jim and Mary Van Zandt are still amazed that Braniff Airlines went under. After a two-year, long-distance relationship, the couple thought surely they had spent enough on flights to keep Braniff in the air for a long, long time. "I was from Chicago and Jim was from Texas," Mary said, reminiscing about the first time they laid eyes on one another. "I could have gone anywhere in the country for training, and I chose Texas."

That happened to be the first of many trips from Chicago to Texas for Mary, and



At Home With Jim and Mary Van Zandt



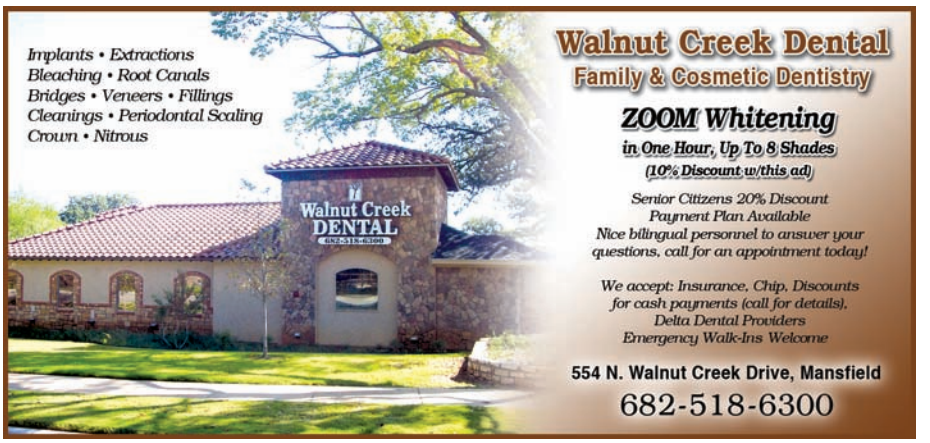
from Texas to Chicago for Jim. "I came looking to meet a cowboy," Mary said, still smiling at the memory. "When I saw Jim across the room in jeans, a white shirt and cowboy boots, the sparks just seemed to fly for both of us."

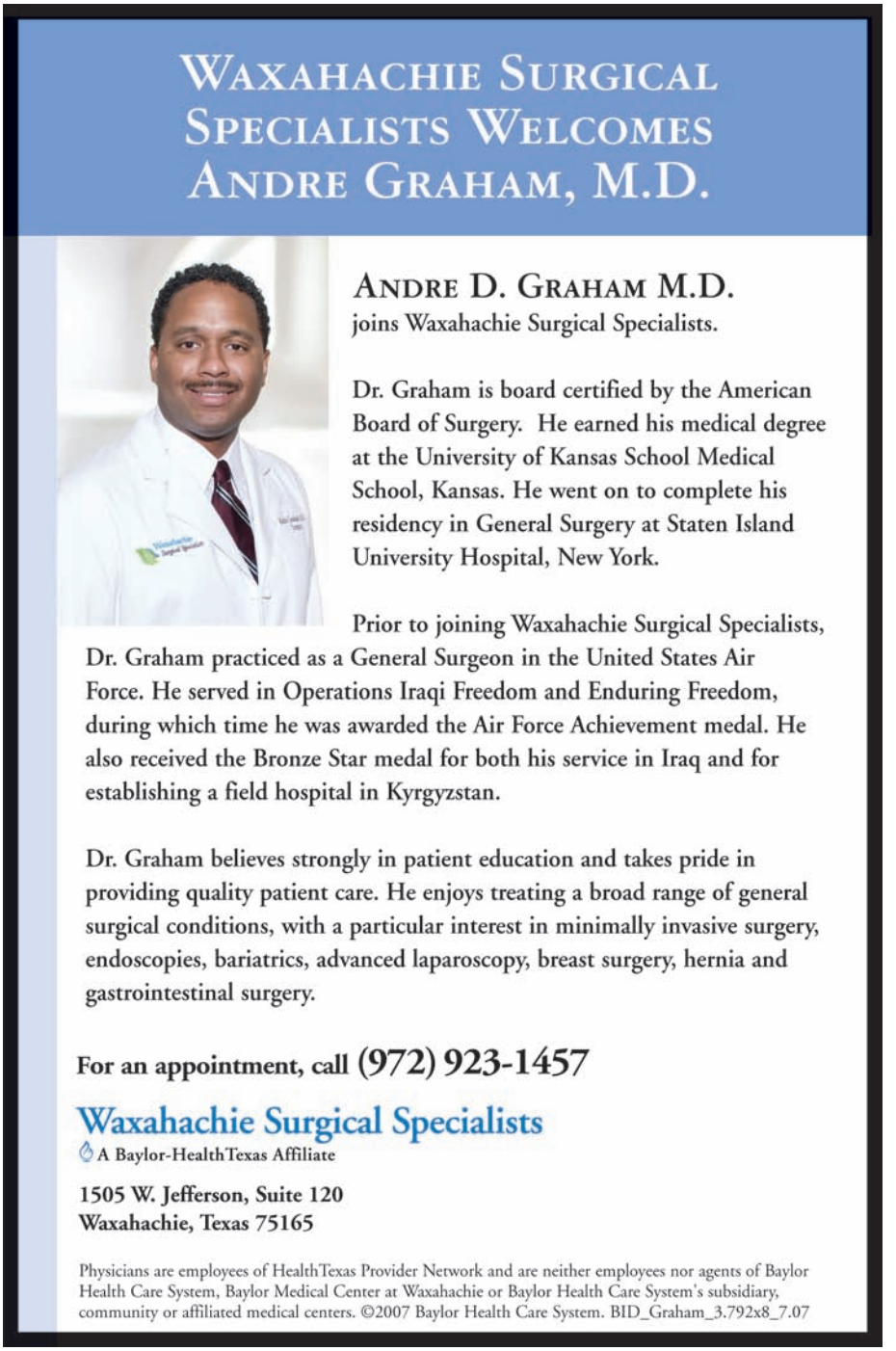
"Every third weekend, I'd fly to Chicago or Mary would fly to Texas," Jim remembered, as if it were just yesterday. In reality, it was well over 25 years ago.

"When we saw it, we knew we wanted it."

On June 26, 1982, the couple exchanged vows, blending two families together as one. Their first address as husband and wife was in Arlington. Nearly 10 years into their union, they decided it was time to build a ranch they could call their own. Looking back on the 16-acre purchase, Jim and Mary can finally laugh aloud when remembering the backbreaking work that went into getting the property in shape. "The overgrown underbrush must have been eight to 10 feet high when we bought the place," Jim said. "When we saw it, we knew we wanted it."











It took the couple two years of working non-stop on weekends to successfully clear the land. They bought a tractor to help with the work and almost every Saturday night they enjoyed a bonfire ignited by the fruits of their labors. "It was hard work," Mary said. "But, it was so fun to see our vision come to life."

Once the land was cleared, it was time for the couple to "stake out" where they wanted the house to rest before the building process began. "We went through that first bundle of 100 stakes and had to go back to Home Depot for some more," Jim said. "Once we had it staked out, we walked around, getting a feel for what the house would be like."

The couple designed, contracted and spent many hours on-site once construction of the four-bedroom, three-bath country ranch home began. "We wanted to have as much control





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over the building process as possible," Jim said. "The contractors were excited and took a personal interest in our vision."

Paul Lustenhouwer, the couple's cabinet man, is still one of their dearest friends. Mary told him all those years ago that she was not interested in traditional cabinets. "I wanted something different," she said, referring to her dream of bringing cowboys and Indians to life in one setting. "I was looking for something a bit Southwest; something that fit Texas. He mocked up the details to show me, and the rest is history."

Paul not only was instrumental in bringing Mary's ideas to life in the





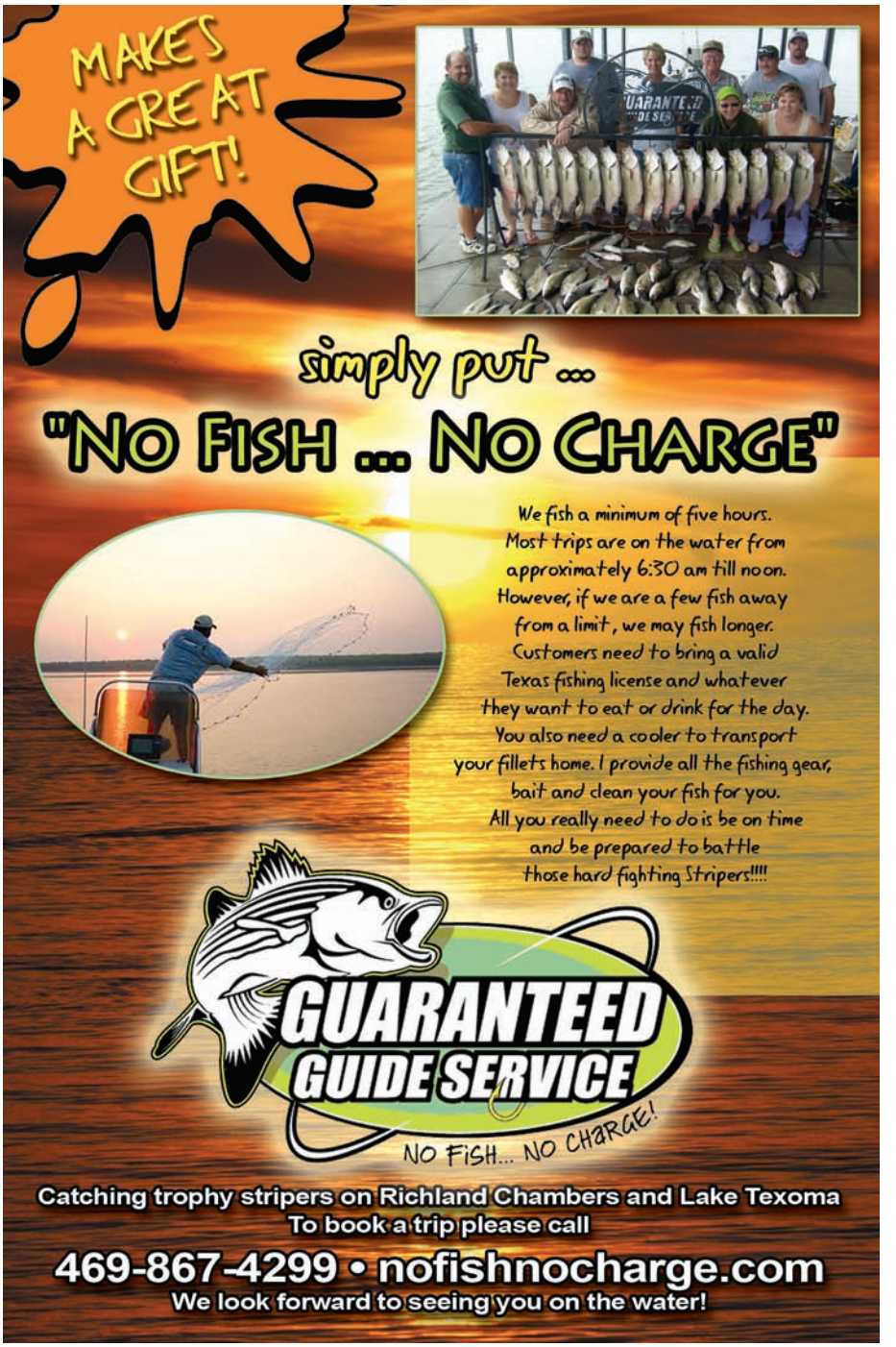
kitchen, but also in the entertainment center in the great room, the massive desk in the couple's home office and specialty items, which include several picture frames, as well as a customized pool table. "He asked us what we were going to do for a pool table. He told us



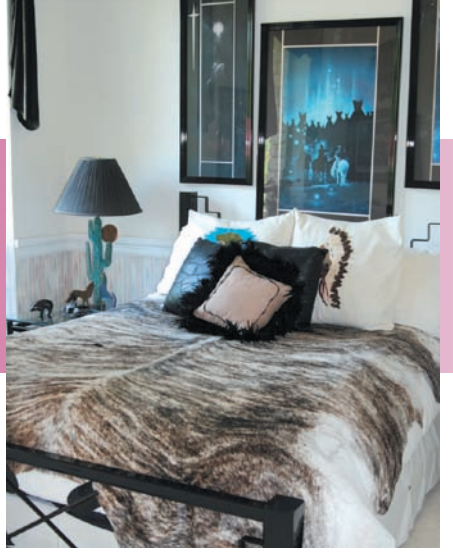
to get the slate, bumpers and pockets off an old table," Mary said. "Paul is a true artist. He never let me down." The pool table, designed exclusively to match the cabinetry throughout the 5,000-square-foot abode, was a house-warming gift from Paul. Still today, Paul is being challenged by Mary's requests for custom designs and to outdo what he has already been able to accomplish.

The pine beams are a focal point of the home's interior. They were











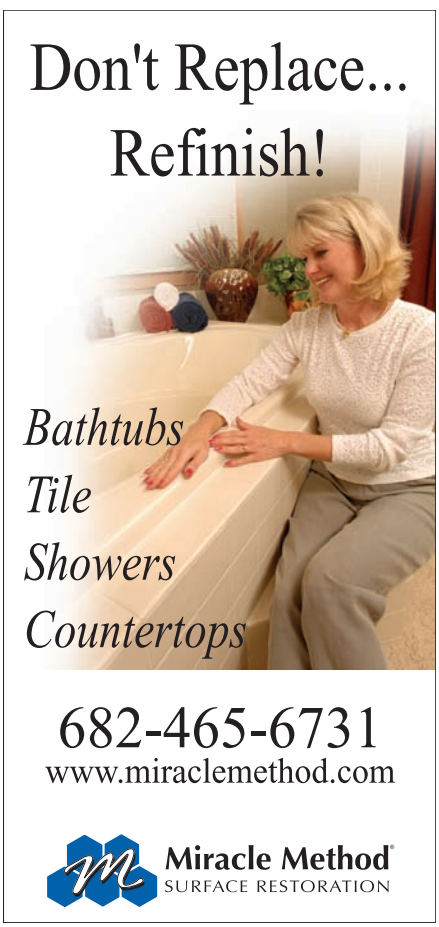
sandblasted prior to installation. Once in place, it came time to paint them. This proved to be one more labor of love for Jim and Mary. "The painters stained them," Jim said. "Thirty minutes later, they were an ugly shade of yellow. The stain just kept soaking into the wood."

If you have not already guessed it, the Van Zandts love a challenge. Figuring out the best possible way to get the beams the color and texture they envisioned took some experimentation. "We diluted the wall paint with water," Jim said, still proud of the idea. "It worked." Now, the sap has worked its way through the treatment, lending to the natural feel of the home.

The home itself is faced with Austin stone from a quarry in Kemp, Texas. The floors throughout are carpet and Colorado flagstone. The idea, the couple said, was to design the home with maximum wall space to accommodate their massive collection of artwork; a multitude of windows that look out to the horses they love; and comfortable, but private, surroundings for their children and grandchildren.

Furnishing the home also proved to be somewhat of an ordeal. "It took us nearly 13 years to find just the right dining room table," she said. "I knew I wanted a wood look with a glass top." Mary got exactly what she dreamed of thanks to Sandy Smith, another artisan who is now a lasting friend of the family.









"The table base is mesquite wood. The two pedestals have three prongs each," Mary said. "It was Sandy's idea and it turned out great." The inlaid turquoise that Sandy added as an afterthought is the table's focal point. Turquoise inlaid accents are also found in the entertainment cabinet in the master bedroom and in the bar stool seats in the kitchen, both built by Paul.

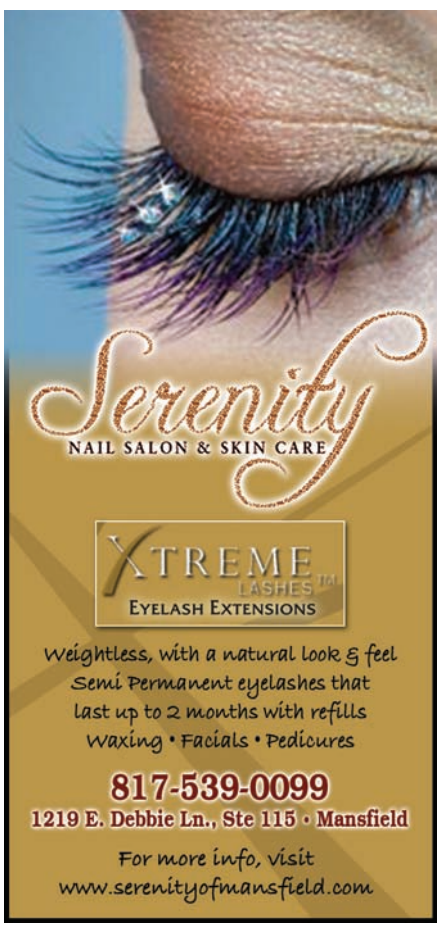
The master suite is a story in and of itself. Sandy's husband, Dan, was the artist behind the one-of-a-kind bed frame. "Dan built it from fencing that dates back to the 1800s," Mary said. "I guarantee there's not another one like it anywhere." The same can easily be said for the comforter. "I designed it," Mary said. "Jim constructed it. It's cowhide and suede leather with a fringed leather dust ruffle." Jim remembered that it took up nearly the entire floor space in the three-car garage.

The pool was added one year after the home's construction was complete. When asked what is next on the "to do" list, the couple just laughed. "We were ahead of our time," Jim said, referring to the home's overall style. "It's a constant work-in-progress just to keep it maintained."

Mary views their 25 years together as a labor of love that she would not trade for anything in the world. "It's our home, our life and our love," she said. "It's exactly what we envisioned." NOW

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The Road to Success

— By Alex Allred



The Magnolia Rose Band found their road through family, friends and faith.

If you look closely, there is a wrinkle in the bumper sticker. "I've learned to love that wrinkle," said Stephanie Gow, one of the lead singers for the Magnolia Rose Band.

Certainly, the band has experienced a few wrinkles along the way to their debut CD *The Road*. The band's pre-release concert at the Walnut Creek Country Club coincided with the freak dust storm in February 2007. On the date of their official release — April 13th (as in Friday the 13th), "The sky fell out," laughed the band's other lead singer, Karen McGough. But as torrential storms whipped through the Dallas/Fort Worth area, it did not dampen the spirits of the nine members of the Christian rock band.

Even when bugs besieged them during their recording session in Franklin, Tennessee, it was viewed as a good sign. "There were all these bugs darting around," Karen said. While recording in the small music booth, Karen and Stephanie noticed a sea of ladybugs on the ceiling. When Karen commented to Dark Horse Studio's producer, Bill Elder, he merely laughed, "Yeah, it's the year of the ladybug. Every year we're infested with something." For the Magnolia Rose Band, it was the year of the ladybugs.

"I got curious," admitted Karen, who researched the symbolism of ladybugs. She had been intrigued as this was not the first ladybug instance for the band. She found that they can represent success, wealth and prominence. But for the band that once lost power during a concert and had to send their drummer home to retrieve his own generator to finish the set; for the band that had to travel to Tennessee during the Christmas holidays because it was the only available recording time — a stressful time when one of the band's lead singers temporarily lost her voice and then had to fly home for the funeral of a grandmother — the promises of wealth and prestige by way of ladybug seemed highly unlikely.

Yet, there is nothing ordinary about this band. Even as they dream of climbing the charts with their music, they do not want to lose sight of their mission. They are insistent that their



Jam sessions are also family time.

devotion, dedication and commitment are "for the ministry."

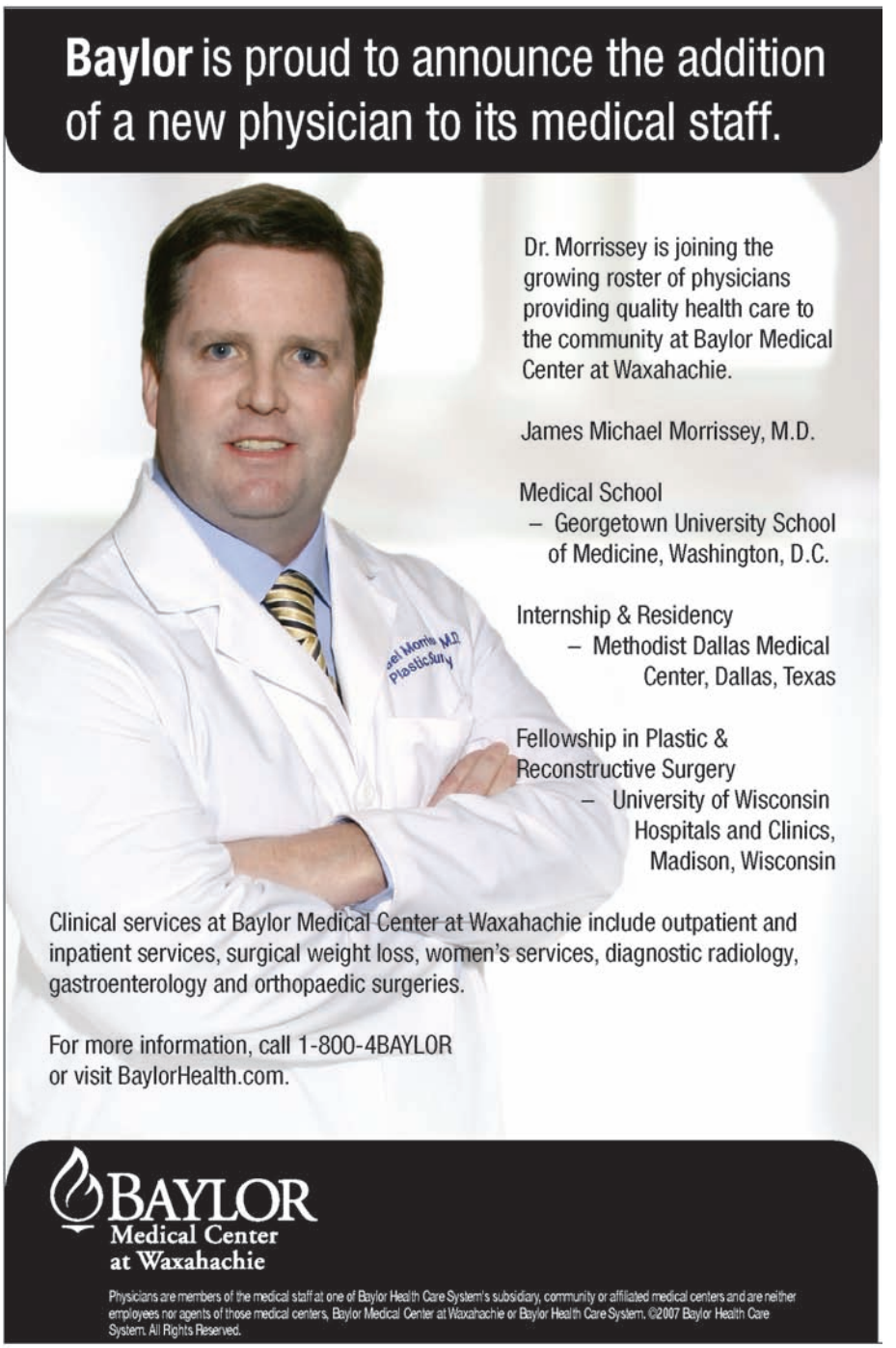
Ironically, the nine musicians are members of First United Methodist Church in Mansfield, but initially, they did not all know each other. It was not an ad on the church's bulletin board or open auditions that brought this group together. It was a trip to a Mavericks basketball game.

When Karen's husband was out of town, she offered the extra ticket to Stephanie – the daughter of a basketball coach and the same woman who had taught Karen's oldest son in middle school. The two women had become friends through the church and their love of singing. There was an instant and mutual respect for each other's

Today, Stephanie and Karen pose as the front women for the group. It is a position they are reluctant to take because they see the Magnolia Rose Band as a family.













singing. Both had dreamed of singing professionally. Both, for one reason or another, had been drawn to the church, each other and, eventually, to Stephanie's brother, musician and songwriter Doug Peak.

Stephanie's brother and former member of the Sideways Café Band had performed regularly on 6th Street in Austin, often bringing his younger sister with him to perform. Years later, when Doug accepted a coaching

"The Magnolia Rose Band is one of those rare musical groups that is representative of much more than music."

position in Magnolia, Arkansas, at the Southern Arkansas University, he suddenly found himself alone. Stephanie suggested they establish a long distance Bible study session together each morning at 5 a.m. He agreed, and as they studied, talked and laughed together at his life — eventually, his music began to change.

"What did he say? He said his only friend was the mouse under the kitchen sink," Karen commented.

Privately, Doug expressed a renewed devotion to family and his faith in a journal. It was private, that is, until the day he called his sister and sang "Making Room" over the phone.

Stephanie still remembers the phone





Top Photo: Ken Baysden plays a riff on his five-string bass. Bottom Photo: Drummer Ron McCraine sets the beat.

call that came as she was putting her young son down for bed. Tears streamed down her face and instinctively, she knew one day this would be a song, among others, that had to be shared with the world.

In turn, Doug teared up the first time he heard Stephanie and Karen sing his music together. This was just the beginning. Guitarist Kevin Edmundson, mandolin and guitar player Larry Carrell, pianist James Creel, drummer Ron McCranie and











"Together, they encompass the heart and soul of the group."

bass player Ken Baysden came aboard to create and play the music Doug pulled from the pages of his journal. The Magnolia Rose Band would only become official as Shawn DuMond joined the fold, as road pastor.

Today, Stephanie and Karen pose as the front women for the group. It is a position they are reluctant to take because they see the Magnolia Rose Band as a family. But together, they encompass the heart and soul of the group. They are lively, warm, sincere and beautiful from within. As the cover girls, they are as diverse as they are gorgeous and talented. Despite the wrinkles and freak storms, the Magnolia Rose Band is one of those rare musical groups that is representative of much more than music.

They are talent and heart. Indeed, this is the year of the ladybug, for they have already achieved great wealth and success. For more information about this band, log on to their Web site www.magnoliaroseband.com NOW

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Taking a Hit

— By Alex Allred

As you steady yourself, you know you are going to be hit with what will feel like hundreds of pounds of solid mass bent on destruction – your destruction. Your heart pounds as you take a stand, knowing that you have only seconds to prepare yourself. It is going to be fast, and it is going to be hard. To make matters worse, your movements are encumbered by a thick, heavy suit – the same suit that will ultimately protect you against flesh-tearing bites. You are a human decoy in the training process for protection dogs.

"If you don't do it right," decoy Tim Steagall said, "it's very stressful on the teeth and spine." When Tim speaks of protection, it is not himself he is speaking of, but the dogs. While great attention is given to the raw power and agility of protection dogs, few people consider the demands and athleticism required of human decoys.

"You want the dogs to bite you where you want them to," pointed out international dog trainer and Mansfield resident, Butch Cappel. He said a good decoy knows how to take a hard hit and protect the body and positioning of a dog at the same time. For Butch, while he truly enjoys the rigors of being attacked, the safety of his dogs is of the utmost importance.

"When you get hit by a good dog," he said, "you have to know how to stand, how to take a hit and, at the same time, switch body positions with the momentum of the dog." To qualify, a "good dog" is a dog that hits and bites you hard enough to knock you off of your feet. As for the actual biting, the heavy 40-pound suit can only protect the decoy's body against flesh tearing. The pain is very real and intense. Butch said, "The bite feels like a hacksaw in a vice." The suit protects against tearing, but not bruising.

As the dog latches on, snarling and violently jerking against the decoy, clawing at the upper body and constantly biting and re-biting, the decoy must move with each lunging attack of the dog. "It's hard," Butch admitted. "Your own spine takes a hit." The term "catching" a dog means to be hit and attacked by a dog. For decoys, however, the term translates to caring for the animals.



For obvious reasons, a good decoy is hard to find. For an upcoming trial competition, Butch flew Tim in from Portland, Oregon, to be the event's decoy. A training apprentice and decoy-hopeful, Maryann Morehead, arrived from Oklahoma. Much like elite athletes, good decoys put in many hours of hard training. In October, Mansfield's K-9 Pro-Sports will be hosting the World Championships for protection dogs, with representatives from Canada, Denmark, Switzerland, Mexico, Holland and Australia.

When the obvious is asked, the dog trainers laughed. Why would you want to get attacked by dogs? Both Maryann and Tim agreed that it is a "rush" and, certainly, ego is involved. But Butch offered a little more insight into the minds of a decoy.

"There are some people who like [to] test their bodies, to see how far they can go. There are others who get









satisfaction in more adversarial arenas, say, like a boxer. For us, for people who can catch a dog, there's a sense of accomplishment and learning. Especially," he added with a smile, "when it's a new dog and you know you're about to get nailed."

To understand this way of thinking, you must first understand Butch





Maryann prepares her dog to attack.

Cappel. On the outside, he is rough: strong, athletic, straight to the point. But his motives for protection dogs are anything but coarse. Beyond the obvious love Butch has for his personal dogs, he has volunteered dogs to protect women who were victims of domestic abuse. In working with a Swiss decoy, the government of Switzerland became aware of this program and were so impressed with it that they actually

adopted it as national policy. Today, Butch also houses 14 rescue dogs from Hurricane Katrina.

Feeling so strongly about the protection of women, Butch continues to help where he can. "Dogs are the world's oldest security system. With all our technology," he said, "We're just copying Mother Nature's original plan." If Butch had it his way, every woman would own a dog.

"I had a friend who was severely



beaten," Butch said, offering little details except that she was female and that in anger, he sought out the assailant. But things turned ugly when the bad guy had buddies. "They beat the snot out of me," Butch recalled, until his shepherd/collie mix jumped out of his truck. "She saved me," Butch said.

Since then, he has been returning the favor, taking in abused dogs and turning their lives around. With tremendous satisfaction, he can say that he is dispelling the protection/attack dog myths, making the animals calmer and happier.

"At the end of the day," he said, "the reward is taking a sincere and devoted creature and giving him the satisfaction of helping a humble or miserable human being to feel better and to be better through this relationship."

For more information about the upcoming World Championships or about the Hurricane Katrina rescue dogs, contact Butch at (817) 483-2026 or log on to his Web site www.K9prosportsonline.com. NOW





Long-Term Vision: CARING ABOUT YOUR Eyes

— By Alex Allred



The caring staff of Advanced Vision Care is on the cutting edge of technology and ready to assist you with your eye care needs.

Did you know that bargain sunglasses could irreversibly harm your eyes? If you have ever purchased sunglasses, considered using contacts, been told you could never wear contacts or contemplated laser eye surgery, Advanced Vision Care of Mansfield is the place to visit.

On the surface, it is a place of business where a person can go to get customized eyeglasses. But the dark mahogany wood furnishings with rich upholsteries and paintings are indicative of something much more. Great detail and personal touch has been given to every aspect of the business, including the patient.

"We're old school," office manager Julie Benne said. "We don't want a one-time deal with you; we want to establish a relationship."

For this office crew, dispelling myths about eye care is very important. "Convenience stores are not any more convenient," licensed optician and lab manager Israel Beutista said. "I want you to understand what kind of glasses

you have. If you ask someone what kind of glasses they wear, they usually don't know."

In their company mission statement, Advanced Vision Care promises to provide the highest standards through state-of-the-art instrumentation, as well as personal attention. In fact, they even offer a two-year frame and lens warranty.

Whether they make a sale or not, Julie and optician Merri Coleman want patients to know how cheap lenses, particularly those that make UV



If old school means giving the utmost customer service and care to patients then, truly, Advanced Vision Care is old school.

protection claims, can actually harm your eyes. They will spend an inordinate amount of time explaining the value of anti-reflective coating and polarized lenses simply because they care about your eyesight. As they do this, it is certain they will also be telling jokes, sharing stories and inviting patients to come back just to say, "hi."

Taking the lead from their director, Dr. Kevin Smith, the staff is always on the cutting edge of technology. This would include vision-shaping contacts, a revolutionary alternative to contact lenses, glasses or laser surgery. Imagine a contact that could be worn at night that actually reshapes your cornea to correct your vision while you sleep so that you would not need any corrective lenses during the day.



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Dr. Harrison trained at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, Texas and has moved to the Mansfield/Arlington area to provide a wide range of general surgical needs for its residence.

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"With eye care, you really do get what you pay for," Israel said.

For this reason, the Advanced Vision Care team is proud to take time to get to know each patient and understand their different needs and lifestyles. They have a high success rate with contact-wearing patients who were once told they could never wear contacts and providing flexible frames for active children prone to excessive wear and tear on normal frames. In fact, children are not the only ones who need these frames. Parents and grandparents often need frames that are childproof.

"Our customer service sets us apart," Julie said. Patients are pleasantly surprised how approachable and accommodating Dr. Smith is with his time and care. In fact, patients who are unable to remove their own contacts will come in, free of charge, to have them removed and replaced. "I feel good when I walk in the office every day because I know I am helping people," Julie said.

It is a feeling that is so powerful her daughter, Shiloh Hanson, has also fallen in love with the business and profession. Now a part-time employee, Shiloh plans to attend Texas Christian University to become a licensed optometrist and work full-time with the team.

For the team at Advanced Vision Care, theirs is more than a job. "I feel proud of what I do," Israel said. If old school means giving the utmost customer service and care to patients then, truly, Advanced Vision Care *is* old school.

When Dr. Smith built the practice, he said, it was based on a philosophy his mother once shared with him. "She said you're going to have to do it right eventually, so you might as well do it right the first time." For Dr. Smith, this meant caring for neighbors, building lifetime relationships and serving as a community leader. Certainly, it was a vision. NOW

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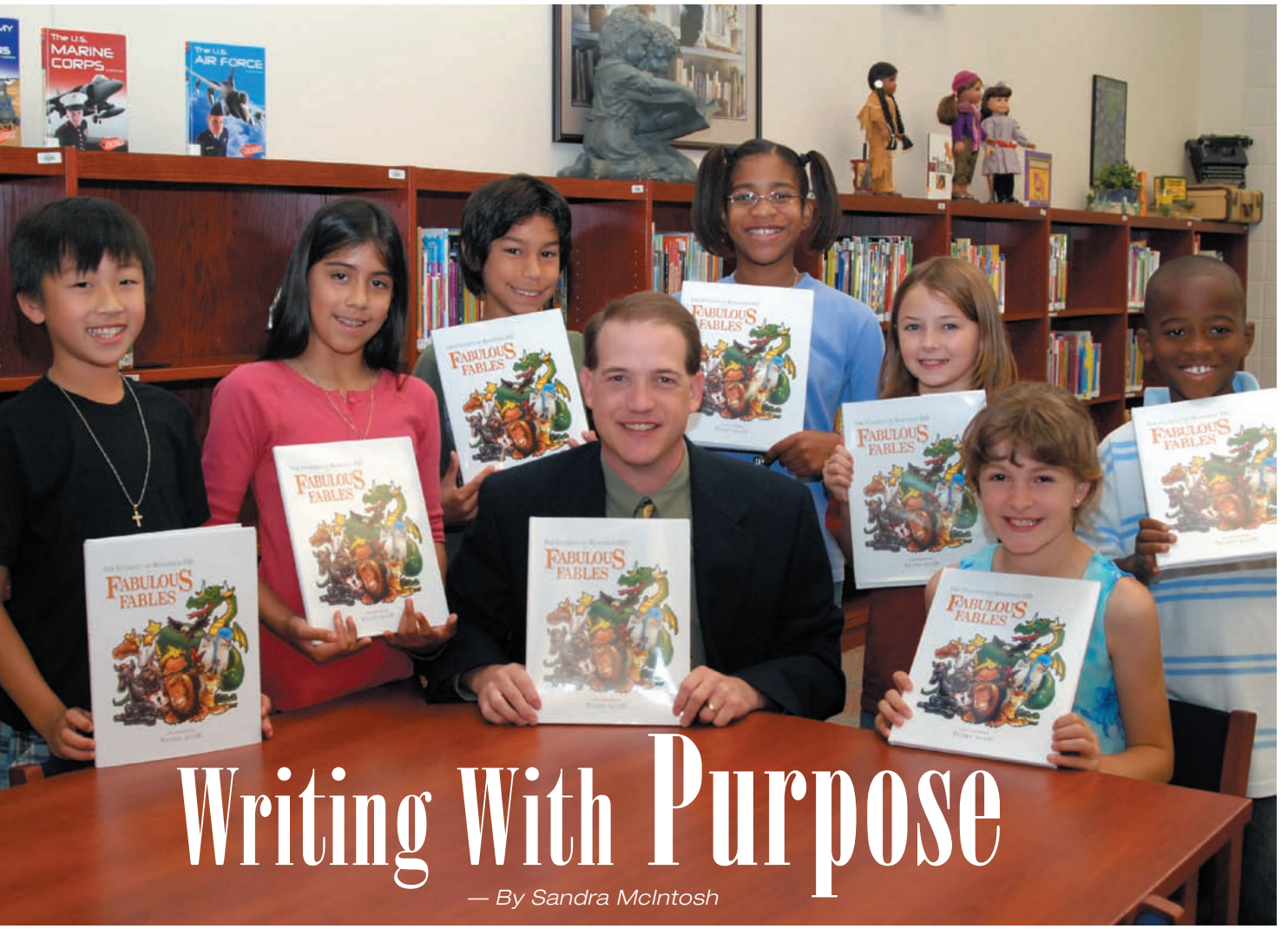
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Writing With Purpose

— By Sandra McIntosh

How many students can honestly say they had a book published when they were in elementary school? How many adults can say they took part in the process of seeing such a book come to fruition? Within the Mansfield Independent School District, the answer to these two questions would be "many."

The idea of a book became a reality for the district not long after a special guest came to speak at Janet Brockett Elementary. "Rhonda Pike, the campus librarian, and I took Mr. Vuthy Kuon to lunch," Principal Chuck Roe said. "It was during this time the idea of a book came up. When he told us he'd done something similar in the Houston area, I wanted to hear more about his proposal."

When talking turned into brainstorming, Chuck came up with an idea that seemed to be a winner. "I suggested we get all the elementary campuses involved," Chuck said, "and we incorporate each mascot into the book. We all got chills!"

Chuck realized the idea of a book would take some detailed planning, as well as district-wide participation, but he was more than up for the challenge. "I didn't move on the project until I had obtained the district's approval," Chuck remembered. "At that point, why would we not participate? It quickly became a labor of love; a 'no-brainer' so to speak."

With 13 of the 18 elementary campuses vying for a page in the book, certain guidelines, rules and criteria had to be decided upon and put into place to keep the process educational, as well as memorable. "Each campus mascot had to be incorporated in the stories submitted," Chuck said. "There was a 250 word limit and each entry had to have a moral inclusive to the story." Chuck further explained that the entries could be written by individuals, groups of three to five, entire classes and/or entire grade levels. Students from prekindergarten through the fourth grade were all eligible to participate.

Once the guidelines were in place, the writing began. The name of the book is *Fabulous Fables*, so keeping the content in

line with the book's overall theme became of utmost importance. Kenneth Davis Elementary presented over 300 individual entries from their campus alone, so needless to say, judging became one of the most important steps of the



"The students wrote with a purpose instead of writing to a prompt. They learned that reading and writing can be fun."

entire book publishing process. "Each campus was instructed to turn in their top three stories," Chuck said, referring to the final phase of judging. "It was up to each individual campus on how they made their top three choices."

Dr. Sarah Jandrucko, associate superintendent for elementary campuses, Chuck and three elementary librarians made up the committee in charge of culling through the top stories that were chosen. "We met at CiCi's," Chuck said. "We all read each and every story. We looked for how well they were written, made sure they had action that would make for great illustrations and stories that were morally sound."

From this process came the 13 stories





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that so aptly represent Mansfield ISD and its elementary campuses. Just three weeks prior to the final day of school in May, the books arrived to the delight and surprise of all those who actively participated in the book publishing process. "So many of the kids were surprised that changes had been made to their stories," Chuck said, explaining the editing process that all books must go through prior to publication. "It was a good lesson for them to learn at a young age. Even well-known authors get edited. It was a hard lesson learned, but it is part of the process of writing."

Charlotte Anderson Elementary's littlest viking taught the lesson on how important it is not to tease your little brother. Rex the dinosaur from Martha Reid Elementary learned the importance of always standing up for yourself, while Anna Mae Daulton Elementary's jaguar learned how important it is not to brag about how good you are. The lesson on being nice to everybody was told by Cora Spencer Elementary's bronco. TJ, the shark from the Thelma Jones campus, had to get ill before fully understanding the importance of not eating too fast and being wary of strangers. Alice Ponder Elementary's cheetah learned that "cheetahs" never win, as the stallions from the Elizabeth Smith campus conveyed the success of

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Education NOW



The elementary school children in the Mansfield Independent School District are learning that reading and writing can be fun.



teamwork in poetry. Dolphins from Kenneth Davis Elementary learned that one must believe to achieve. Mary Jo Sheppard Elementary's colt only deceived himself, when he chose to tell a lie, while at the J.L. Boren campus, they learned not to "mess with bear." Willie Brown Elementary's eagle saw firsthand how important it is to "BEE patient." The star from the D.P. Morris campus learned to be careful what he wished for because it might just come true. "All fourth grade classes were involved in the winning entry from Brockett," Chuck said. "The moral to our story was to always be happy with who you are as told by a jealous lion."

The books will give students a lifelong memory they can share with their own children and grandchildren one day. The back cover is also very unique. "The first name of each and every child that participated is listed on the book jacket's back cover," Chuck said. "The students wrote with a purpose instead of writing to a prompt. They learned that reading and writing can be fun." NOW

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From left to right: Martin Fielder, M.D., Robin Johnston, M.D., David Russell, M.D., John Jeffers, M.D., Baron Atkins, M.D., Keryn Dias, M.D., Ellen Parrill, M.D., Russell Dickey, M.D., Byron Kallam, M.D., John Paul Wood, Jr., M.D., Mary Finke, M.D.

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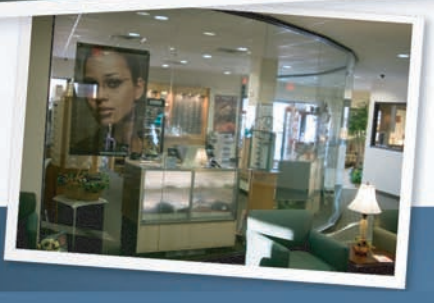


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The Mansfield Chamber of Commerce has been busy with several ribbon cuttings. Shown, top row from left, are Logix Communications, Pioneer Services and Women's Health of Mansfield. Shown, middle row from left, are Healthy Body Chiropractic, Mansfield Garden Club and Multi Care Home Health. Students, bottom left, from Roberta Tipps Elementary participated in the school's first ever chess tournament hosted by the Dad's Club. Ben Taylor, bottom right, was recognized for winning first place in headline writing.















Ribbon cuttings were held at Regency Business Center, top left, and WCCC Pavilion, middle left. Richard Davis, directly above, was awarded for exhibiting honesty, integrity and sportsmanship. MISD and the Mansfield Methodist Medical Center, top right, collaborated to create a hand-washing campaign for students. Summit High School student Eric Nimmer, right middle, was recognized for his participation in the Lincoln-Douglas Debate. Students from Timberview High, bottom right, received commendations for their artwork.

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For more information about the doctors, please visit www.MCNT.com



Look Who's Cooking

— By Melinda Hines

In the Kitchen with Athena Runyan

Athena Runyan credits her grandmother, Anna, for her interest in cooking. "As a young girl, I would stand on a chair helping her cook," she said. "She was truly my inspiration in many things in life." Athena does not stick to typical or traditional recipes and enjoys creating new dishes and flavors. "Creating vegetarian dishes and using fresh fruits or vegetables is a passion of mine and even a fondue dinner is not uncommon in our home," Athena said.

She loves to cook for anyone who is willing and open to trying new things. "There is nothing more frustrating for a cook than serving guests who are not open to new and exciting tastes," she said. "Experimenting on my gracious husband, Shawn, is fun, too." NOW

JESSICA'S FAMOUS CHICKEN SALAD SANDWICH

In honor of a culinary friend.

3 organic chicken breasts, poached
2 shallots
dried fruit (I prefer a mixture of blueberries, cherries and cranberries)
smoked almonds
fresh tarragon, to taste
sea salt, to taste
3 Tbsp. Vegenaise spread (organic, vegetarian mayonnaise substitute)
12 slices fresh, organic 9 grain bread
fresh spinach leaves and tomato slices for garnish

Dice poached chicken breasts, mince shallots and chop dried fruit and almonds. Place all in a large bowl and add Vegenaise spread, mixing gently. Season with salt and tarragon to taste. (You may add more Vegenaise as desired.) Spread thin layer of Vegenaise on bread and heap on the salad. Layer with spinach and tomatoes as desired. *Makes 6 yummy sandwiches.*

ORGANIC BANANA "MILKSHAKE"

1 whole frozen banana
2 Tbsp. organic almond butter
2 Tbsp. "yammit" (dried organic yams, which can be found at health food stores; or use organic corn flakes)
1 tsp. organic honey
1/2 cup organic soy milk
6 oz. crushed ice

Place all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth. *Makes one rich and creamy, but healthy, summertime snack.*

HEARTY VEGETARIAN SANDWICH

whole grain bread



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avocado
Roma tomatoes
sprouts
roasted red pepper
hummus

Spread hummus on two slices of bread and layer on the veggies to your liking! *Refreshing and light, yet filling!*

ZUCCHINI PANCAKES

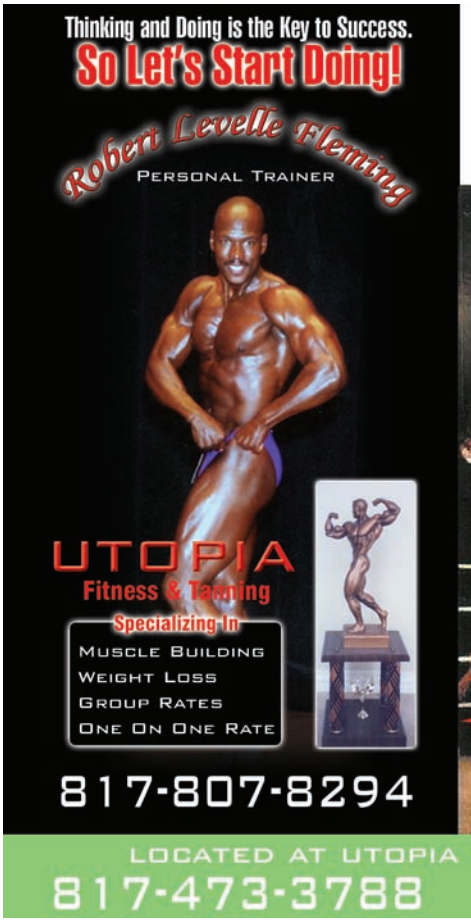
1 cup shredded zucchini
1 egg
1 - 2 Tbsp. whole wheat flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder
dash sea salt
1 tbsp. sunflower or sesame seeds (optional)
fruit spread or mild salsa

Stir first five ingredients together just until mixed. Pour batter onto preheated buttered griddle. Before flipping the pancake, sprinkle with seeds, if desired. Serve with fruit spread or salsa. *Surprisingly delicious!*

ORGANIC SWEET POTATO CHIPS

3 large organic sweet potatoes
olive oil
sea salt, to taste
tarragon, to taste

Thinly slice potatoes and spread in single layer on baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, turn and repeat on opposite side. Bake at 400 F for about 15 minutes, checking for crispness. Remove from oven; season with sea salt and tarragon to taste. *Allow to cool and enjoy!*





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How to Choose a Financial Advisor

If you are like most people, you have a variety of financial goals: college for your children, a comfortable retirement, a vacation home and so on. You might be able to achieve all these goals on your own, but you will likely find it a lot easier if you get a little help from a financial advisor.

But how do you choose the right one? For starters, ask your friends, relatives and co-workers whom they use. Then interview some of the people they recommend. What questions should you ask at such an interview?

Consider these:

- **What are your qualifications?**

Make sure you are talking to someone who, at a minimum, has all the required licenses for selling securities.

- **What type of experience do you have?**

Find out how long someone has been a financial advisor, but do not rule out a person with only a limited amount of experience – a new financial advisor frequently brings a great deal of enthusiasm to his or her work. A financial advisor's longevity is less important than whether he or she has had experience working with someone like you – someone in your financial situation, with your goals and your investment preferences.

- **What is your investment philosophy?**

Try to learn if someone favors a specific style of investing or a particular class of investments. These styles or classes may be well-suited for some investors but inappropriate for others. If you believe the person you are talking to has a "one-size-fits-all" mentality, you might want to look elsewhere.

- **How will you communicate with me?**

Financial advisors run their businesses in different ways, so there is no one "right" way of communicating with clients. However, you need to feel comfortable that someone will always be available to answer your questions, review your accounts, evaluate your situation and make appropriate recommendations. If you are interviewing someone who has a partner or an assistant, find out whom you are likely to be communicating with, should you decide to become a client.

- **What services do you provide?**

Find out just how a prospective financial advisor can help you. For example, some people sell investments only, while others offer investments and insurance. Keep in mind, though, that you do not need to be a "one-stop" shopper when it comes to obtaining a wide range of services. In fact, you might want to ask a prospective financial advisor if he or she has developed working relationships with legal and

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tax advisors. This "team" approach can be quite beneficial to you, especially when you get into the area of estate planning.

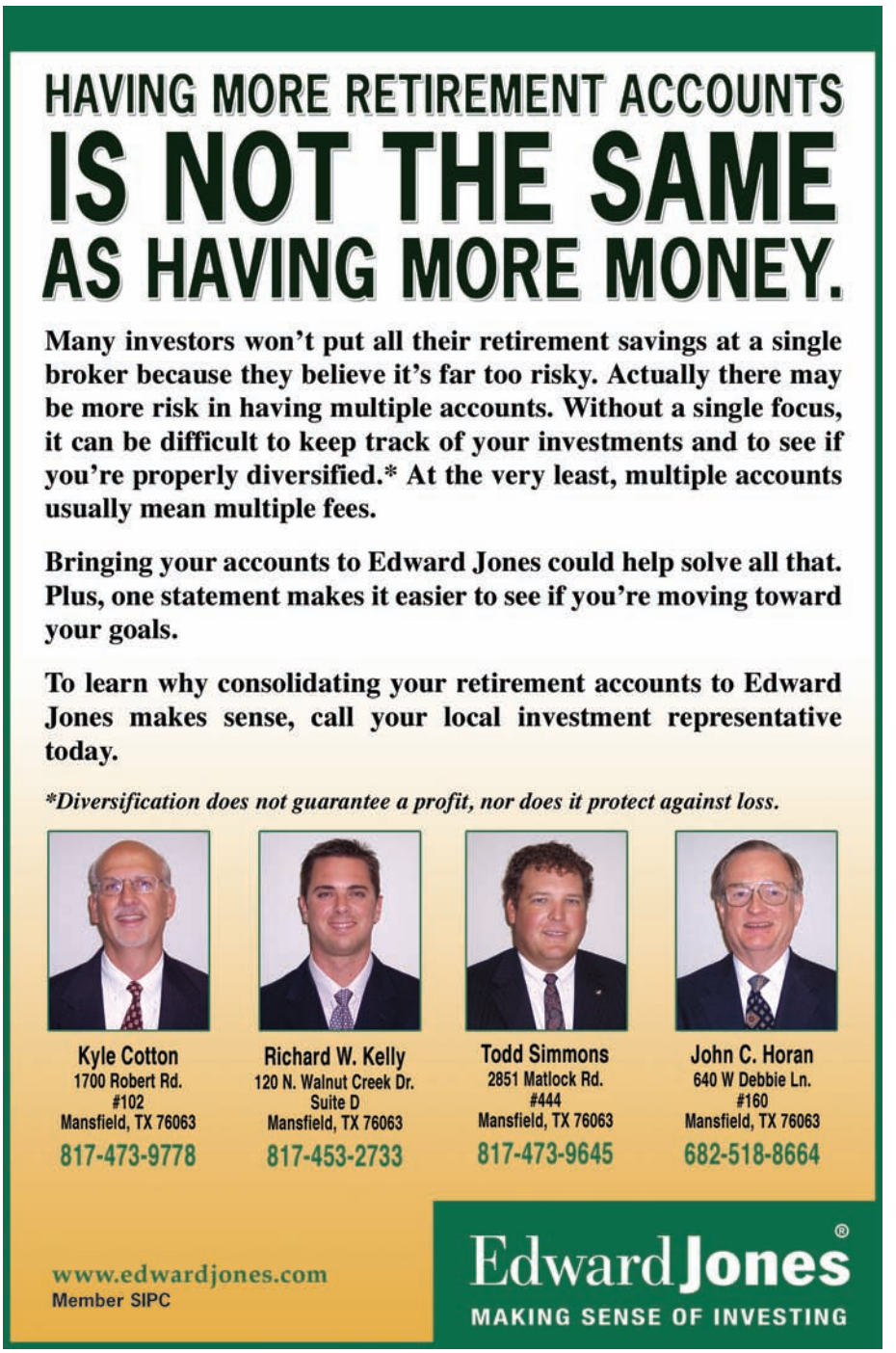
• How are you paid?

Financial advisors get paid in several different ways: fees, commissions, salary or some combination of these methods. One way is not necessarily any "better" than another, from your point of view, but you should have a clear understanding of what type of compensation is being used.

Your association with a financial advisor is one of the most important business relationships you will ever have. So, make sure it is a good one – right from the start. NOW

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Back Pain Safety



Dr. James Ellis, an orthopedic surgeon on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie, offers the following tips for dealing with back pain, a common and complex condition. On average, about 25 percent of Americans experience chronic or sporadic back pain. There are many different possible causes, the most common being accidents, muscle strain and sports injuries. While many back injuries are minor and temporary, more serious injuries can include a fractured vertebra, a slipped vertebra or vertabrae and damage to nerve function called cervical radiculopathy.

"The majority of back pain that I see comes from people who have been injured," Dr. Ellis said.

Most back pain can be treated with a combination of therapies, including physical therapy, pain medication and/or anti-inflammatory medications. "In some cases, surgery may be required, but that all depends on the individual patient and their condition," Dr. Ellis said.

In most cases, back pain can be more annoying than debilitating. However, a trip to the doctor is advised should you feel numbness or tingling. Your doctor may use an X-ray, CT scan or MRI to further assist in pinpointing the area of concern.

To relieve common back pain:

Rest: If you have been doing strenuous activities such as moving or lifting heavy objects.

Heat: A heating pad can help to alleviate some of the pain and help increase your movement.



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Strengthen: Working on your abdominal muscles can also help to internally support your spine.

Standing: While standing you should keep your head up and abdominal muscles pulled in. You should also avoid wearing high heels.

Sleeping: You may have to try out soft and hard mattresses in order to find one that will not give you back pain.

Sitting: When sitting in a chair it should be of an appropriate height for you and should give you adequate lumbar support. NOW

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Color in the Shade

— By Nancy Fenton

Finally, the sun is shining through the lush green canopy. It would be great if I had more holes in that canopy! The heavy roof of leaves gives us shade from the scorching sun, but is hard on flowerbeds where we want some color. There are several ferns which do well in our alkaline soil that can give you multiple shades of green, and a few multicolored bulbs that can still brighten your beds. Holly fern is fairly large, about three feet tall and wide, with large dark green fronds. Japanese painted fern has multicolored white and green leaves and is a bit smaller. Both do well in shady areas and compete well with large trees! Autumn ferns are about 12 - 15 inches tall and make a great low border, and the old standard wood ferns survive well growing to about three feet in height.

If you mix them in with bright white, pink or red caladiums, they can really brighten a dark, shady bed. It really is not too late to plant caladiums, if you can find them. The bulbs themselves have a blooming life of about three months, so there is still time for them to come up and look great until fall. I just learned this spring that you can hurry the time from planting until they come up by soaking the bulbs for 30 minutes in warm water before you plant them. We still have August, September and October before the nights get cold, so give them a try!

Purple oxalis is another bulb that will come up year after year and will do well in the shade. It takes awhile, but will reward you with a low-growing splash of bright purple in a not-so-bright flowerbed. The bulbs are usually very small, so be prepared to put a lot of them in the ground! Then enjoy the rest of your summer and rest up for fall plantings! NOW

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.







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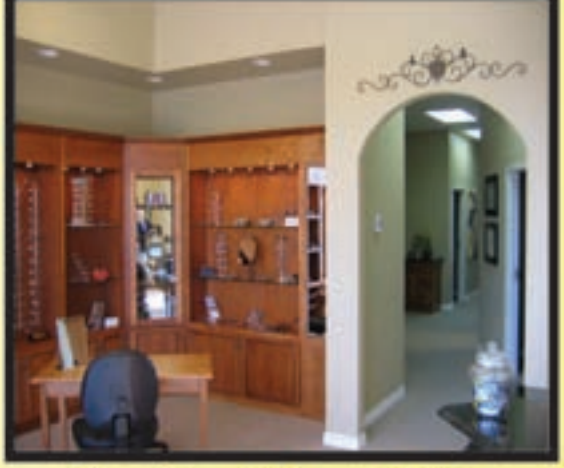
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August 2007 Community Calendar

First and Third Tuesdays
Training Academy for Dental Assistants' free informational sessions at 5:30 p.m. For details, call (972) 842-2999.

Second and Fourth Mondays
Texas Ladies Networking meets from 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Fire Mountain Grill in Waxahachie. For more information, call (214) 587-1221.

Kiwanis Afternoon Club meets at Fire Mountain Grill on Hwy. 287 in Mansfield. Visitors welcome. (817) 453-0872.

Mansfield City Council meeting begins at 7 p.m. at Mansfield City Hall, 1200 East Broad Street.

Every Tuesday
Small business counseling provided by SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives). Learn about business start-up, cash flow management, marketing and the development of advisors or board directors. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Mansfield Chamber offices, 114 North Main Street. To set an appointment, call (817) 473-0507.

Mansfield Public Library hosts Bouncing Babies Story Time for infants up to 2-year-olds from 10:30 - 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - noon.

Every Wednesday
Mansfield Public Library hosts On My Own Story Time for 3- to 5-year-olds from 10:30 - 11 a.m.

Every Thursday
Mansfield Public Library hosts Special Kids' Story Time from 10 - 10:30 a.m. Please register for this special-needs program in advance by contacting Annette at the library at (817) 473-4391.

Mansfield Public Library hosts Toddler Story Time for 2-year-olds from 11 - 11:30 a.m.

Every Friday
Kiwanis Club of Mansfield meets at 7 a.m. at Fire Mountain Grill. Membership and other information can be obtained by calling (817) 473-9886.

August 2
"How to Write a Business Plan," from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $35 for members and $50 for non-members.

August 7
"HR Basics – the ABC's of Hiring," from 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $50 for members and $75 for non-members.

Mansfield Home Child Care Association "Interviewing" from 7 - 9 p.m. in the meeting room of the Mansfield Public Library. For more information, visit mansfieldchildcare.com.

August 9
"So You Want to Start Your Own Business?" from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $50 for members and $75 for non-members.

August 16
"Do It Yourself Web Site – Technical Session" from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $50 for members and $75 for non-members.

Amateur Radio Club meets at 7:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Fire Department station on Water Street. For more information, visit wd5ddh.org.

August 21
"Marketing – Building Your Brand" from 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $50 for members and $75 for non-members.

August 27
Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meets at St. Paul Episcopal Church, Hwy. 287 at Ovilla Rd., Waxahachie. 7 p.m. Visit CQGuild.org for more information.

August 28
"HR Basics – Firing Do It the Right Way" from 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $50 for members and $75 for non-members.

August 30
"Low-Cost Marketing for Small Business" from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the Chamber offices. Cost is $35 for members and $50 for non-members.

